



## Tapping the Power of Child Play

Children are an amazing source of energy. Each generation fizzles with the restlessness and optimism of youth. But all that energy is expended in the playground, leaving behind nothing but the sound of laughter. What if that energy could actually be harnessed and turned into electricity? And electricity to power the cash-strapped school the children need to attend to get a good head start in life?

Meeting the Millennium Development Goal of achieving universal primary education would be significantly helped if schools had electricity and in turn the ability to use computers and the Internet. As well, school buildings can be used to their maximum if they have lights for night schools, and expand to secondary and adult education. It is typical practice in Africa to use schools in the evenings for older students. But usually they only have kerosene lamps to turn to for light.

The need is urgent for electricity for schools in Africa: even sub-Saharan Africa's richest nation, South Africa, has 5,131 schools without electricity. And in the battle for energy, schools have to compete with businesses and cities, as increasing demand makes power outages more common.

Child-power is currently used to run [Playpumps](#)' merry-go-rounds, drawing water from wells. But a children's see-saw hopes to use the same principle to bring light to power-starved African schools. Children in Uganda are involved in a pilot test of a see-saw that generates electricity with the simple up-and-down motion of the playground ride. The electricity generated is sent to a storage battery via an underground cable. Just five to 10 minutes on the see-saw can generate enough electricity to light a classroom for an evening.

The see-saw is being tested in the Ugandan city of [Jinja](#), made from locally sourced parts, and has been designed by 23-year-old British design student Daniel Sheridan. He was inspired after volunteering on a school trip to the island of Wasimi, south of Mombasa, Kenya, while building a school and teaching.

"The number of children we saw there that loved to play, and their vibrancy, I thought it would be great if I could somehow make use of this," he told the BBC.

"They don't have Gameboys and all the rest. They are just so genuine and keen to help – they would grab the wheelbarrows we were working with given the chance."

Sheridan won £5,500 (US \$10,930) to further develop the idea at various university student enterprise award schemes. The money is being used for prototype development.

"The current need for electricity in sub-Saharan Africa is staggering. Without power, development is extremely difficult. The potential for this product is huge and the design could be of benefit to numerous communities in Africa and beyond."

After the prototype testing in Uganda he hopes to either start a business or charity to manufacture the see-saws.

His dream? "Ultimately I would love to design a whole playground of different pieces of equipment that could generate enough electricity to power a whole village."

### LINKS:

- **Playpumps International:** More child-powered ways to make a difference: these water pumps draw water from a well while children spin on the merry-go-round.  
**Website:** [www.playpumps.org](http://www.playpumps.org)
- **OUIP! Or Optimized Universal Interface Platform:** This white plastic

### In this issue:

- [Tapping the Power of Child Play](#)
- [Illiterate Get Internet at Touch of a Button](#)
- [The South has a Good Story to Tell](#)
- [Insects Can Help in Food Crisis](#)

### Featured links:

- [Babajob.com](#)
- [Equator Initiative](#)
- [Kiva.org](#)
- [SSC Website](#)

### Skip to a section:

- [Window on the World](#)
- [Upcoming Events](#)
- [Training Opportunities](#)
- [Job Opportunities](#)
- [Past Issues](#)

### Bookmark with:

  
  
  
  

[What are these?](#)

handheld electronic bar uses the child's play motion to power it, while it makes noises and displays images.

**Website:** [www.thinkthing.net](http://www.thinkthing.net)

- **Sprig Toys:** Electro-mechanical toys made from wood and recycled plastic that are run on child-power only.

**Website:** [www.sprigtoys.com](http://www.sprigtoys.com)

-----

## Illiterate Get Internet at Touch of a Button

Quick access to information is crucial for development. The remarkable spread of information around the world via the internet has been one of the greatest achievements of the 21st century. The astounding take-up of mobile phones is another. For those who can afford it or get access to a computer and electricity, the new technology is a powerful tool for economic and social advancement. But what about people who are caught in the technology gap, or who are illiterate?

What about those who have a mobile phone, but are too poor to own a computer - or live in a village without electricity? Or those who can't read or write? In India, there are 42 million Internet users, 3.7 per cent of the population. But the country is also home to the largest number of illiterate people in the world: 304.11 million (Human Development Report).

A unique solution in rural India is developing a way to connect the illiterate to the internet. The Open Mind Programme's [Question Box Project](#), opened its first Box in the village of Phoolpur in September 2007.

The idea is brilliantly simple. An intercom-like white tin box with a phone inside is placed in a village's public areas. Using the existing phone networks, the user just has to hit a simple button to get an operator at the other end. The operator sits in front of an internet-enabled computer. The user just asks their question, and the operator turns these questions into search queries. When the computer's search engine gives back answers, the operator selects the best one and then replies in the user's native language and in layman's terms.

The operator's role goes beyond simply typing questions into Google – the operators use intelligent software that aggregates frequently asked questions (FAQs) to speed up time. FAQs include: school scores, job opportunities, football/cricket scores, and definitions and terms. Operators will also send emails for the users.

The service also has a role to play for the literate who lack Internet access. Students once had to travel to get their exam results, but now they can just ask the Question Box.

The Question Box operates in normal business hours for now. A second Question Box was put into operation at the beginning of 2008 in the village of Ethida, several hours' drive from New Delhi, and there are plans to expand the Question Box to 30 units connected to 20 operators.

At present, organizers are looking into raising revenue for the service by advertising and sponsorship. Operators are typically homeworkers and well-educated. Mostly female, their parents are happy to have them work from home.

During this first phase, the project team analyzed the results and refined the structure of the service. They are also exploring viable business models to be able to take the service across India and keep it sustainable.

Professor of Psychology Ritu Dangwal from the [NIIT Institute](#), is in charge of working with the villagers to monitor the project. She is also involved in a start-up called [Hole in the Wall](#), which provides internet kiosks to rural villagers. Dangwal's research has starkly correlated the relationship between distance from a big city and decreasing quality of education, a graphic example of the damage done by being cut off from good information resources.

The Question Box is based on an idea from Rose Shuman, a business and international development consultant. Shuman had become frustrated that with all the clever people and vast sums of money going into information technology, few were developing low-cost ways to take the power of computers to the people.

"The best thing about this project is that it's very tangible," she told the Daily Telegraph newspaper. "It's not a big infrastructure. You have a box you can see and touch, and a call log of every question."

### LINKS:

- Photographs of the project launch and the Question Box: [www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com)

-----

## The South has a Good Story to Tell

The fast-changing modern world is raising the living standards of billions in the South – China alone has lifted 400 million people out of poverty since the 1980s - but it is also risking the loss of many rich cultural traditions. One of them is storytelling.

Oral storytelling is a critical tool for passing on history, while teaching morals and ethics, especially in societies with low

rates of literacy and little formal education. But with the rise of modern media and advertising, few traditional storytellers – many of whom are old – stand a chance. Populations are on the move like never before. As more and more people end up in sprawling cities, many are becoming disconnected from their roots.

Yet across the South, people are finding ways to re-invent story telling – and also to make money, preserve cultural pride and feed the appetite for novelty in hungry, modern media and business.

In 1997, storytelling was acknowledged by UNESCO, which pledged to back humanity's oral and immaterial heritage, and to protect a vast number of oral and musical traditions, crafts and knowledge – plus the "living human treasures" who possess them. It backed this up in 2003 with the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. It supports storytelling through its [International Programme for the Development of Communication](#).

But what about the young – the most important generation for storytelling to have a future? In Bogotá, Colombia, students have started a movement of urban storytellers. Aged between 17 and 35, they draw on the things they have learned in university. They eschew linear narration and instead adopt the popular language of films and advertising. Inspired by one television commercial, a story revolves around a drop of tomato sauce falling from a high-rise building, sparking a gun battle. The staccato narrative takes inspiration from post-modern authors like [Italo Calvino](#). It is also the perfect narrative to capture modern, urban audiences who live in a world saturated with media.

By blending together ancestral and post-modern tales, these student storytellers are luring Latin Americans back to listening to stories. Live storytelling, when done well, has an ability to connect with other people like no other medium. This new generation also is helping make Colombia a gathering place for storytellers in Latin America, expressed in events like the [Hay Festival Cartagena](#), a literary event that draws authors from around the world.

But is there any money in storytelling? Tale-spinners like Argentinian Juan Moreno say yes. Moreno quit teaching 17 years ago to tell stories for money in theatres, bars, universities and libraries, tapping into a contemporary marketplace for storytelling.

In fact, it is better paid than acting in the theatre, he claims, and if you are good, it comes with lots of travel. There is a global round of congresses, festivals and seminars to keep storytellers connected, inspired – and paid.

Moreno now makes money teaching many professions how to use stories to be more powerful communicators. He told the UNESCO Courier, "the value of the spoken word, words that heal and restore, that can give life but also take it away," are key to many fields, like law and social work.

The world centres of storytelling are very much focused on the South. The International Congress of Oral Storytelling, part of the Buenos Aires Book Fair, has been running every year since 1995. At the Congress, tips are exchanged over the subtle tricks of timing and voice, gestures and facial expressions. Other Southern cities with storytelling events, include Bucaramanga, Colombia, Monterrey, Mexico and Agüimes, in the Canary Islands.

While young people are breathing new life into storytelling, Morocco's legendary storytellers have been facing a common dilemma seen across the developing and developed world: how can they compete with flashier and more distracting pastimes like computer games and TV?

Illiteracy in Morocco affects 40 per cent of the population, so telling stories is an excellent way to reach this non-reading group. Stories and parables have long been seen as a great way to convey ideas, values and philosophies.

But Morocco's storytelling sages, or halakis, are using their heads and turning to computers to get their stories told, and prevent their thousand-year tradition from dying out. With the help of UNESCO, the halakis have created a digital archive of their stories in audio and video.

Based in Marrakesh's famous main square, Jemaa al-Fna, they compete in a hurly burly of street entertainers and aromatic foods; it is a place where men with monkeys vie with snake charmers for your attention. Morocco's storytellers would set up in the public squares of the cities of Fes, Meknes and Marrakesh to entertain crowds and educate about morality. These would include the ethical values of kindness, honour and chivalry. But Marrakesh is now the only place where a half dozen old men (there used to be 20 in Marrakesh) still practice this ancient art form.

UNESCO declared the square in 2001 part of the world's "[Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity](#)." Video recorders have been documenting the storytellers and chronicling them on the internet.

Spanish writer Juan Goytisolo, who spends part of his year in Marrakesh, has championed the halakis in his book, *Marrakesh Tales*, and in bringing UNESCO in to help them. He has defended their corner against the plans of city planners and developers.

Seventy-one-year-old Moulay Mohammed is blunt about the current state of storytelling: "Young Moroccans would rather watch TV soap operas than listen to a storyteller, much less become one themselves," he told the BBC. Mohammed's stock-in-trade is the *Old Testament* and all of *A Thousand and One Nights*: both tales of sultans, thieves, wise men and fools, mystics, genies, viziers and belly dancers. And he has been telling these tales for 45 years.

In South Africa, digital technology is also breathing new life into storytelling – and infusing the stories with urgent, contemporary issues like HIV, and domestic and sexual violence. South African women are using digital technology to preserve traditional storytelling: A collection of 15 digital stories – called "I Have Listened, I Have Heard" – made in 2006 are being distributed along with books. They assembled the stories using audio recorders and made movies of the readings with digital cameras. It was funded by the [Foundation for Human Rights](#) and made at the [Women's Net Computer Training](#)

[Centre in Johannesburg.](#)

The storytellers worked together on each script, taking a day. They would tell the group a story focusing on particular experiences or meaningful moments in their lives. The group would comment and draw out the best bits of the story. The whole process helps the storyteller to flesh out the story with metaphors, narrative techniques and milestones.

#### LINKS:

- The basics of story telling are answered in this webpage: [www.timsheppard.co.uk](http://www.timsheppard.co.uk)
- Singapore International Story Telling Festival 2008: This year's festival also includes a new addition: [Asian Digital Storytelling Festival](#)
- International Congress of Oral Storytelling: Held from 2-4 May 2008 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. [Website: www.el-libro.org.ar](#)
- Folk Tales: Online project where Pakistani students and their teachers share folklore and fables with students around the world.  
[Website: www.edutopia.org](http://www.edutopia.org)
- Thirsty-Fish: Story and Strategy: A consultancy that helps businesses build their brands based on age-old practices of storytelling.  
[Website: www.thirsty-fish.com](http://www.thirsty-fish.com)

## Insects Can Help in Food Crisis

For many years it was a given that the world's problem was not a lack of food, but that it was unfairly shared. But as the switch to biofuels gathers pace, farmland is being diverted away from growing food for people, to food for fuel. On top of this, growing prosperity in many countries in the South has boosted demand for better quality food, including grain-devouring meat diets - it takes 10 kilograms of grain to get one kilogram of meat from a cow. The crisis has deeply alarmed the UN's World Food Programme and the World Bank. In the economic battle for food, the poor are the most vulnerable.

So-called agflation (agricultural inflation) has seen spiraling food prices, which in turn are causing food shortages, hunger and malnutrition around the world. For example, rice in Thailand has jumped from US \$400 per 100 kilograms in January, to US \$760. World grain stocks are at their lowest level in four decades.

But where can new sources of food be found? And what would be a more efficient use of the world's resources to feed the growing population? One answer, surprisingly, is insects.

In February this year the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization held a conference in Chiang Mai, Thailand to assess the dietary value of insects as food and discuss how to harvest more of them. The working group of three dozen scientists from 15 countries probed the role of edible forest insects in food security. They explored insect protein as a contributor to better nutrition, the economics of collecting edible forest insects, methods of harvesting, processing and marketing edible forest insects, and ways of promoting insect eating with snacks, dishes, condiments -- even recipes.

The range of insects and arachnids that can be tapped for food is huge: beetles, ants, bees, crickets, silk worms, moths, termites, larvae, spiders, tarantulas and scorpions. More than 1,400 insect species are eaten in 90 countries in the South. Known as [entomophagy](#), insect eating is a growing industry. Entrepreneurs in the South are making insects both palatable and marketable - and in turn profitable. These innovations are adding another income source for farmers and the poor, and supplying another weapon to the battle for global food security.

Insects have one big advantage as a food source: they are efficient converters of food into protein. Based on the weight of the food required to feed them, crickets are twice as efficient as pigs and broiler chicks, four times more efficient than sheep and six times more efficient than cows. They breed at a far faster rate, and they contain essential amino acids. They are seen as an ecologically friendly alternative to traditional animal rearing.

There are downsides to insects, however. In areas where there is heavy pesticide spraying on crops, insects can retain the pesticides in their bodies. Another key issue is sustainability: insect harvesting in some places has driven species to extinction. Then there is revulsion for some: in Western diets, there is an aversion to entomophagy, although most Westerners are happy to eat honey.

Revulsion at eating of insects is misguided. Most grains and preserved food products contain large quantities of insects or insect fragments mixed in. For example, rice usually contains rice weevil larvae - and they can be an important source of vitamins.

In Africa, 250 edible insects are eaten, from termites to grasshoppers, and have helped people through many food emergencies on the continent.

In South Africa -- where edible insects are a multimillion dollar industry -- Botswana and Zimbabwe, the local taste for mopane worms is being harvested for profits and nutrition. The worms, which inhabit mopane trees, require only three kilograms of feed (mopane leaves) to produce one kilogram of worms. At a rural factory in Limpopo province, South Africa, the community of Giyani is working to launch a wide range of products made from mopane worms - sustainably harvesting

this larvae of the mopane emperor moth, *gonimbrasia belina*.

The [Greater Giyani Natural Resources Development Programme](#) in partnership with scientists at the [University of Pretoria](#), is developing mopane worm products, including essential oils. The worms are usually parboiled and then sun dried by locals. But at the Dzumeri Mopane Manufacturing Centre, the worms are processed and made ready for market. The local people are being trained in how to harvest the worms hygienically, and how to sort and grade the worms. The products will include deep-fried snacks and seasoning spices. It is critical the worms are harvested in a sustainable way, because in some parts of southern Africa, they have been driven to extinction.

Johnathon Mdawe, the programme manager, is organizing women and youth into co-ops to make viable commercial enterprises. "We expect the product to hit supermarket shelves in 2009," said Morewane Mampuru, coordinator for the Centre for Scientific and Industrial Research, another partner.

One of the women, Mthavini Khosa, mother of four is excited: "For many years, we have been harvesting worms for food. We are excited because we will soon be doing it to make money."

In Thailand, insect harvesting is a well-established business. Thais eat more than 150 insects, including crickets, silk worms and dung beetles. Canned crickets are regularly sold in supermarkets. Bugs are easily bought in the markets of Bangkok.

Online vendor [Thailand Unique](#), based in Udon Thani, sells and markets a wide range of edible insects and arachnids. They include edible scorpions, preserved giant water bugs, roasted grasshoppers, edible big crickets, bamboo worms, crushed giant bug paste, and introducing this year, Bug Snackz and Scorpion Thai Green Curry. There is even a 'Bug Sample Pack', containing a mix of seven edible insects and arachnids, all slow roasted for easy snacking.

Another important centre for insect harvesting is Latin America. In Venezuela, the Pemon Indians eat fire ants during the rainy season.

In Colombia, so-called "fatass ant" or "hormiga culona" is eaten like popcorn in movie theatres. Some believe it is a defence against cancer, or a natural aphrodisiac. Eating the ants or culona, has been happening right back to the ancient Guane Indians.

In Santander province, farmers are exporting the ants for sale, some being dipped in Belgian chocolate and sold as a luxury food in London's Harrods and Fortnum and Mason department stores. The abundant ant population brings in US \$24.25 per kilogram for the farmers, a doubling in price since 2000.

Farmers in the artist colony of Barichara harvest the ants - though concerns have been raised that they have been over-harvesting the population. Restaurants in the area offer ant-based spreads for bread and an ant-flavored lamb sauce.

"It's an age-old dilemma for the farmer – should I kill it or eat it?" said Andres Santamaria to CBS News, who was given a \$40,000 grant from Santander's government to develop an environmentally sustainable, export-oriented programme for breeding the ants.

In Tijuana, Mexico, ancient Aztec, pre-Colombian insect meals are on offer at this restaurant, joining a global trend. [Cien Años \("100 Years"\)](#), specialises in pre-Colombian, Aztec insect recipes. It is proof there is money in preparing insects for food. Typical dishes include garlicky ant eggs and cactus worms in butter.

#### LINKS:

- A network for insect collectors:  
[Website: www.insect.net](http://www.insect.net)
- Sunrise Land Shrimp: A do-it-yourself guide to raising and harvesting insects for food, with important information on health and hygiene:  
[Website: www.slsrimp.com](http://www.slsrimp.com)
- Edible Unique: An online supermarket of gourmet insect food products.  
[Website: www.edibleunique.com](http://www.edibleunique.com)

-----

#### Window on the World

- **The Endless City**  
ed. By Ricky Burdett and Deyan Sudjic, Publisher: Phaidon.  
–This groundbreaking book by the Urban Age Project of the London School of Economics, explores the world's sprawling mega-cities through the experiences of six cities: New York City, Shanghai, London, Mexico City, Johannesburg and Berlin. It is packed with facts, figures, charts, solutions and essays.  
[Website: www.phaidon.com](http://www.phaidon.com)
- **The Last Taboo: Opening the Door on the Global Sanitation Crisis**  
by Maggie Black and Ben Fawcett, Publisher: Earthscan.  
–In 2008, the International Year of Sanitation, the authors bring this awkward subject to a wider audience than the world of international filth usually commands. They seek the elimination of the 'Great Distaste' so that people without political

clout or economic muscle can claim their right to a dignified and hygienic place to 'go'.

**Website:** [www.earthscan.co.uk](http://www.earthscan.co.uk)

- **The World in 2050: Beyond the BRICs**

by John Hawksworth, Publisher: Pricewaterhouse Coopers.

–The report looks for the first time at an additional 13 emerging economies that also have the potential to grow significantly faster than the established OECD countries.

**Website:** [www.pwc.com](http://www.pwc.com)

- **Worldchanging: A User's Guide for the 21st Century**

by Alex Steffan, Publisher: World Changing.

**Website:** [www.worldchanging.com](http://www.worldchanging.com)

- **Sustainable Urbanism: Urban Design with Nature**

by Douglas Farr, Publisher: Wiley.

**Website:** [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

- **The Challenge of Reducing International Trade and Migration Barriers**

by Kym Anderson and L. Alan Winters, Publisher: Copenhagen Consensus Centre.

**Website:** [www.copenhagenconsensus.com](http://www.copenhagenconsensus.com)

- **Chinese Economic Performance in the Long Run – Second Edition**

by Angus Maddison, Publisher: OECD.

**Website:** [www.oecd.org](http://www.oecd.org)

- **The New Asian Hemisphere: The Irresistible Shift of Global Power to the East**

by Kishore Mahbubani, Publisher: Public Affairs.

**Website:** [www.mahbubani.net](http://www.mahbubani.net)

- **Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing Without Organizations**

by Clay Shirky, Publisher: Penguin Books.

**Website:** [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

- **Common Wealth: Economics for a Crowded Planet**

by Jeffrey Sachs, Publisher: Allen Lane.

**Website:** [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

- **The Economist's Tale: A Consultant Encounters Hunger and the World Bank**

by Peter Griffiths, Publisher: Zed Books.

**Website:** [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

## Upcoming Events

### May

- **International Workshop on HIV/AIDS 2008**

*Varadero, Cuba (4-9 May 2008)*

–Organized by the Cuban Society for Immunology and Latin American Association of Immunology, it will explore latest experiences in HIV/AIDS.

**Email:** [tapanes@ipk.sld.cu](mailto:tapanes@ipk.sld.cu) or [Rolando.tapanes@gmail.com](mailto:Rolando.tapanes@gmail.com)

**Website:** [www.sci.sld.cu](http://www.sci.sld.cu)

- **First Global Business Conference and Competition for Off-Grid Lighting in Africa**

*Accra, Ghana (5-8 May 2008)*

–The World Bank Group and its partners are proud to announce Lighting Africa 2008, the first global business conference and development marketplace competition for off-grid lighting in Africa. The conference is designed for investors, financiers, private firms, end users, and development agencies to showcase and expand business opportunities targeting low income populations in Sub-Saharan Africa.

**Website:** [www.lightingafrica.org](http://www.lightingafrica.org)

- **Fashion Africa 2008**

*Nairobi, Kenya (8-11 May 2008)*

–The exhibition is the place to discover the latest ideas and attract a whole new audience. FASHION AFRICA will be the international meeting point for fashion designers / companies to showcase their new Fashion and style products, innovations, equipment and concepts from the Fashion Industry.

**Website:** [www.arabianexposition.com](http://www.arabianexposition.com)

- **International Conference on ICT for Development, Education and Training**

*Accra, Ghana (28-30 May 2008)*

–The 3rd International Conference on ICT for Development, Education and Training is the premier gathering place for all experts and stakeholders engaged or interested in ICT-based projects in Africa.

**Website:** [elearning-africa.com](http://elearning-africa.com)

### June

- **International Youth Crime Prevention and Cities Summit**



*Durban, South Africa (17-21 June 2008)*

–Hosted by the provincial government of KwaZulu-Natal and UN-HABITAT.

The objective is to prevent and reduce crime and violence in our cities, towns and villages. Designed for young people and local authorities who work with them, this four-day event will enable all participants to mobilize, to learn, to experience, to speak, and to act.

**Website:** [www.unhsp.org](http://www.unhsp.org)

- **Nollywood Foundation Convention**

*Los Angeles, USA (20-22 June 2008)*

–The yearly convention and conference to promote Nollywood. With speakers and workshops.

**Website:** <http://www.nollywoodfoundation.org/home.php>

## July

- **Fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning**

*London, UK (13-17 July 2008)*

–Applications are invited for participation in the Forum. It has grown to become one of the world's leading conferences on learning and global development. This year, it will explore how open and distance learning can help achieve international development goals and education for all.

**Website:** [www.pcf5.london.ac.uk](http://www.pcf5.london.ac.uk)

- **Making Markets Work – a Two-Week Training Programme**

*Glasgow, UK (13-26 July 2008)*

–This unique programme focuses directly on a key challenge facing governments and development agencies: how to make markets function more effectively for business and for poor people? The programme builds on the Springfield Centre's successful record in offering training on the market development approach to more than 700 people over the last nine years.

The closing date for applications is **Wednesday 21st May 2008**. However please note that they are offering an early registration discount for applications and fees received by **Wednesday 9th April 2008**.

**Website:** [www.springfieldcentre.com](http://www.springfieldcentre.com)

- **2nd General Assembly and Conference of African Council for Distance Education**

*Lagos, Nigeria (8-11 July 2008)*

–Sponsored by the African Council for Distance Education and the National Open University of Nigeria.

**Website:** [nou.du.ng](http://nou.du.ng)

## August

- **2nd International Conference: Third Sector Innovation: Sustainability and Social Impact**

*Sao Paulo, Brazil (18 August 2008)*

–The focus this year is to continue to raise the profile of the valuable work of social enterprise leaders across Latin America, to share best practices and cases of social innovations.

**Email:** [joao.paulo@gesc.org.br](mailto:joao.paulo@gesc.org.br) or [ashpak@umich.edu](mailto:ashpak@umich.edu)

## September

- **TEDAfrica: A gathering of the greatest thinkers and doers from Africa and the world**

*Cape Town, South Africa (29 September to 1 October 2008)*

–What if Africa had no borders? What if her boundaries extended as far as those living in the diaspora, or even further? What if you could fly directly from Cape Town to Cairo, Lagos to Luanda, Bujumbura to Abuja? Or what if you could drive to every city and every town and every village? What if the Internet was a reality for every African? What if you could call the world from atop the Kilimanjaro, or from deep in the forests of the Congo?

**Website:** [tedafrica](http://tedafrica)

- **2008 Global Youth Enterprise Conference**

*Washington DC, USA (15-16 September 2008)*

–Making Cents International is excited to announce that the Global Youth Enterprise Conference will take place in Washington, DC September 15th-16th, 2008 at the Cafritz Conference Center. Designed as a participatory learning event, this conference aims to support youth enterprise and entrepreneurship programs and policies achieve greater effectiveness around the world. It will build on the outcomes of the first-ever Global Youth Microenterprise Conference, which Making Cents International organized for 270 practitioners, policymakers, educators, youth, and members of the private sector from 28 countries in September 2007. Making Cents is planning this year for 350 participants to share their promising practices, unique approaches, and groundbreaking ideas that help youth develop the necessary skills and opportunities to start their own businesses or seek quality employment. We invite you to submit a proposal, become a sponsor or exhibitor, and/or register!

**Email:** [conference@makingcents.com](mailto:conference@makingcents.com)

**Website:** [www.youthenterpriseconference.org](http://www.youthenterpriseconference.org)

## November

- **Fourth Session of the World Urban Forum**

*Nanjing, China (3-7 November 2008)*

–The World Urban Forum was established by the United Nations to examine one of the most pressing issues facing the world today: rapid urbanization and its impact on communities, cities, economies and policies. It is projected that in the

next fifty years, two-thirds of humanity will be living in towns and cities. A major challenge is to minimize burgeoning poverty in cities, improve the urban poor's access to basic facilities such as shelter, clean water and sanitation and achieve environment-friendly, sustainable urban growth and development.

**Website:** [www.unhabitat.org](http://www.unhabitat.org)

- **South Africa: The Power of Movements – Announcement and call for proposals**

*Cape Town, South Africa (14-17 November 2008)*

–Up to 1,500 women's rights activists from around the world will gather to debate and strategize about how to build a stronger global women's movement. Proposals are sought for organizing a session.

**Website:** [www.awid.org](http://www.awid.org)

## Training Opportunities

### ONGOING

- **Microenterprise and Development Institute New Hampshire 2008**

*Manchester, New Hampshire, USA (8-21 June 2008)*

**REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN**

–The MDI New Hampshire offers another highly relevant programme for microfinance and community development practitioners. The two-week programme presents 19 courses in three Knowledge Tracks: Microfinance, Pro-Poor Enterprise Development and Community Economic Development. Academic credit and Masters degree options are available.

**Email:** [w.maddocks@snhu.edu](mailto:w.maddocks@snhu.edu)

**Telephone:** 603-644-3124

**Website:** [www.mdi-nh.org](http://www.mdi-nh.org)

- **Grameen Bank Microcredit Training Programs**

[Grameen Info](#)

- **System Dynamics-based Development Planning Course**

*Bergen, Norway (31 March – 9 May 2008)*

–Millennium Institute's six-week System Dynamics-based Development Planning Course equips participants with the knowledge and skills required to effectively analyze these challenges and determine the best approaches to mitigating them. The course is designed for policy advisors, planning technicians, advocacy and civil society groups, policy research institutions, private foundations, and bilateral development agencies.

**Email:** [ao@millennium-institute.org](mailto:ao@millennium-institute.org)

**Website:** [www.millennium-institute.org/courses](http://www.millennium-institute.org/courses)

### CAREERS

- **New Website Offers Career Advice to Young Africans**

–Set up by the Commonwealth Secretariat, [Africacareerguidance.com](http://Africacareerguidance.com) is aimed at providing career guidance to African youth and helping them to link with prospective employers. AfricaRecruit is a human resources organisation that provides skills training for African professionals in the Diaspora and on the continent. The website has an inbuilt email subscriber list for all its users and offers a searchable database of career profiles for job seekers and prospective employers. It also offers skills and interest assessments and advice on CV and résumé preparation. It provides tips about interviewing techniques, as well as information on internship and volunteer opportunities, and entrepreneurial skills.

**Website:** [www.africacareerguidance.com](http://www.africacareerguidance.com)

### FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITY

- **2008 Global Youth Enterprise Conference: Call for Proposals!**

–Present to 350 other experts from the international youth enterprise, employment and livelihood community. Practitioners, funders, members of the private sector, academics and youth leaders from over 25 countries and all sectors will share learning, innovations, and ideas for strengthening and expanding opportunities for young people around the world.

**Deadline:** April 18, 2008

**Website:** [www.youthenterpriseconference.org/](http://www.youthenterpriseconference.org/)

- **Institute of Social Studies in The Hague**

–A collaboration between 25 international think tanks in international development, [www.focuss.info](http://www.focuss.info) is a search engine for indexing and social bookmarking online resources in international development.

**Website:** <http://focuss.info/>

- **Funding - Google.org**

–While SMEs in rich countries represent half of GDP, they are largely absent from the formal economies of developing



countries. Today, there are trillions of investment dollars chasing returns – and SMEs are a potentially high impact, high return investment. However, only a trickle of this capital currently reaches SMEs in developing countries. Our goal is to increase this flow.

We want to show that SMEs can be profitable investments. We will do this by focusing on lowering transaction costs, deepening capital markets to increase liquidity, and catalyzing capital for investment. [Website: www.google.org](http://www.google.org)

- **Africa Entrepreneurship Platform**

–This ground breaking initiative is created as a forum to showcase innovative ideas and businesses from Africa that have the ability to scale internationally driving job creation and sustainable economic development between Africa and the Americas.

[Website: www.sacca.biz](http://www.sacca.biz)

- **Piramal Foundation in India**

–Has established a US \$25,000 prize for ideas that help advance full access to effective public health care in India. The Piramal Prize is a \$25,000 Social Entrepreneurship Competition focused on democratizing health care in India that seeks to encourage and support bold entrepreneurial ideas which can profoundly impact access to higher standards of health for India's rural and marginalized urban communities. The award recognizes high-impact, scalable business models and innovative solutions that directly or indirectly address India's health-care crisis.

[Website: www.piramalprize.org](http://www.piramalprize.org)

- **The Pioneers of Prosperity Grant and Award**

–This competition is a partnership between the OTF Group and the John F. Templeton Foundation of the United States, and promotes companies in East Africa by identifying local role models that act as examples of sustainable businesses in their country/region. It is open to businesses from Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi and Rwanda.

Five pioneers will receive US \$50,000 to re-invest in their business. It is open to for-profit businesses that provide high wages to their workers and that operate in sustainable ways.

[Website: Pioneers of Prosperity](http://Pioneers of Prosperity)

- **African Writers Fund**

–Together with the Ford Foundation, the Fund supports the work of independent creative writers living on the continent. The Fund recognizes the vital role that poets and novelists play in Africa by anticipating and reflecting the cultural, economic and political forces that continuously shape and reshape societies.

[Website: http://www.trustafrica.org](http://www.trustafrica.org)

- **Joint NAM S&T Centre - ICCS Fellowship Programme**

–Centre for Science and Technology of the Non-Aligned and Other Developing Countries (NAM S&T Centre) and International Center for Chemical Sciences (ICCS), (H.E.J. Research Institute of Chemistry and Dr. Panjwani Center for Molecular Medicine and Drug Research), University of Karachi, Karachi, Pakistan

[Email: namstct@snl.com;](mailto:namstct@snl.com)

[namstct@bol.net.in;](mailto:namstct@bol.net.in)

[apknam@gmail.com;](mailto:apknam@gmail.com)

[Website: http://www.scidev.net](http://www.scidev.net)

- **Oxford Said Business School Youth Business Development Competition**

–Open to youth between 16 and 21 across the world, the competition is run by students at Oxford University to promote social enterprise. A prize fund of £2,000 in seed capital is up for grabs. It calls itself the 'world's first global youth development competition'.

[Click here for more information](#)

- **US\$250,000 for Best Lab Design**

–AMD and Architecture for Humanity have announced a prize of \$250,000 for the best design for a computer lab that can be adapted and implemented in third-world countries.

The Open Architecture Prize is the largest prize in the field of architecture and is designed to be a multi-year program that will draw competition from design teams around the world.

[Website: http://www.openarchitecturenetwork.org/](http://www.openarchitecturenetwork.org/)

- **PhD Plant Breeding Scholarships at the University of Ghana**

The [University of Ghana](http://University of Ghana) has been awarded a project support grant by the [Alliance for a Green Revolution](http://Alliance for a Green Revolution) in Africa (a joint venture between the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation, for the establishment of a West African Centre for Crop Improvement (WACCI). This is available to scientists working at NARIs, universities and international centres in West Africa. Women scientists are especially encouraged to apply for a fellowship under this programme.

**Website:** <http://www.acci.org.za>

■ **Genesis: India's Premier Social Entrepreneurship Competition**

–A social entrepreneurship competition aiming to bring together social entrepreneurs, students, NGOs, innovators, incubators, corporations and financiers and encourage them to come up with innovative ideas which are socially relevant and feasible.

**Website:** <http://genesis.iitm.ac.in/>

■ **Echoing Green: Social Entrepreneurs Fund**

–They are looking for social entrepreneurs developing new solutions to social problems. They are accepting applications for their 2008 fellowships (two-year funding of up to US \$90,000 for 20 entrepreneurs).

**Website:** <http://www.echoinggreen.org/>

■ **2008 Sustainable Banking Awards**

–The Financial Times, in partnership with IFC, the private sector arm of the World Bank Group, today launched the 2008 edition of the FT Sustainable Banking Awards, the leading awards for triple bottom line banking.

Two new categories - Banking at the Bottom of the Pyramid, and Sustainable Investor of the Year - have been added to the ground-breaking programme.

The awards, now in their third year, were created by the FT and IFC to recognise banks that have shown leadership and innovation in integrating social, environmental and corporate governance objectives into their operations.

**Website:** <http://www.ifc.org>

■ **Challenge InnoCentive**

–A challenge to the world's inventors to find solutions to real scientific and technological problems affecting the poor and vulnerable.

**Website:** <http://www.innocentive.com/>

**You can read more about the challenges here:** <http://www.rockfound.org>

■ **Global Social Benefit Incubator: A US \$20,000 Bottom of the Pyramid Scholarship**

–Offered by Santa Clara University's Global Social Benefit Incubator, it selects 15 to 20 enterprises from developing countries and provides an eight-month mentoring process. This ends with a 10-day process in Santa Clara, where entrepreneurs work with their mentors.

**Website:** [www.socialedge.org](http://www.socialedge.org)

## Job Opportunities

- [Africa Recruit Job Compendium](#)
- [Africa Union](#)
- [CARE](#)
- [Christian Children's Fund](#)
- [ECOWAS](#)
- [International Crisis Group](#)
- [International Medical Corps](#)
- [International Rescue Committee](#)
- [Internews](#)
- [IREX](#)
- [Organization for International Migration](#)
- [Oxfam](#)

- [Relief Web Job Compendium \(UN OCHA\) \(1\)](#)
- [Relief Web Job Compendium \(UN OCHA\) \(2\)](#)
- [Save the Children](#)
- [The Development Executive Group job compendium](#)
- [Trust Africa](#)
- [UN Jobs](#)
- [UNDP](#)
- [UNESCO](#)
- [UNICEF](#)
- [World Bank](#)
- [World Wildlife Fund \(Cameroon\)](#)

Please feel free to send your comments, feedback and/or suggestions to Cosmas Gitta  
[cosmas.gitta@undp.org](mailto:cosmas.gitta@undp.org) Chief, Division for Policy, Special Unit for South-South Cooperation